CHAPTER 5

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

All four study areas are located within a quarter-mile radius of the Naaman's Road (Delaware Route 92) intersection with Marsh Road (Delaware Route 3). Two of the parcels, the Darley Road and Marsh Road study areas, are located south of Naaman's Road; the other two, the Naaman's Road (East) and (West) study areas, lie to the north. The initial fieldwork element at each location involved a preliminary walk-over. This was followed by a program of systematic shovel testing, preceded in some instances by limited clearing of vegetation to increase ground visibility and facilitate access. Although field investigations were performed separately at each study area, subsurface tests were numbered in a single numerical sequence covering the project as a whole (Appendix A). Three excavation units were also used in the subsurface investigation of the J.G. Hanby House Site at the Marsh Road study area. Cultural materials recovered during fieldwork are inventoried in Appendix B. Field investigations at each of the four study areas are described in greater detail below.

A. Darley Road Study Area

There are no standing structures within the limits of this study area (Figure 5.1). The terrain is wooded and covered with a light understory. A stone field wall traverses the northern section of the study area, indicating that the area was once cleared and farmed (Plate 5.1). Surface visibility at the time of field survey was near zero. Efforts consequently focussed on attempting to locate any above-ground remains or surface anomalies which might indicate the presence of subsurface cultural features. The pedestrian survey, however, encountered no features of interest other than a partially completed millstone that had already been identified in the earlier DelDOT survey of the area (Cunningham et al. 1986).

The unfinished millstone is located just beyond the study area in a boulder field (Plate 5.2). The millstone evidently cracked whilst being fashioned from one of these boulders and was abandoned in place. Despite a thorough search of the surrounding area, no other signs of millstone manufacture or stone quarrying were observed either within the project study area or its immediate vicinity.

After completion of the pedestrian survey, a series of 11 shovel tests were excavated within the study area (Figure 5.1; Appendix A). The majority of these tests (ST 2-4, 6, 8-11) were laid out at 100-foot intervals along a transect running parallel to Darley Road; three additional tests (ST 1, 5, 7) were placed within the areas of the small retention basins. All ten tests revealed the presence of a thin (0.25-0.45 feet) layer of silty loam overlying layers of silty clay. These layers of clay represent relatively intact wetlands subsoils. No artifacts or significant archaeological deposits were encountered in any of these shovel tests.

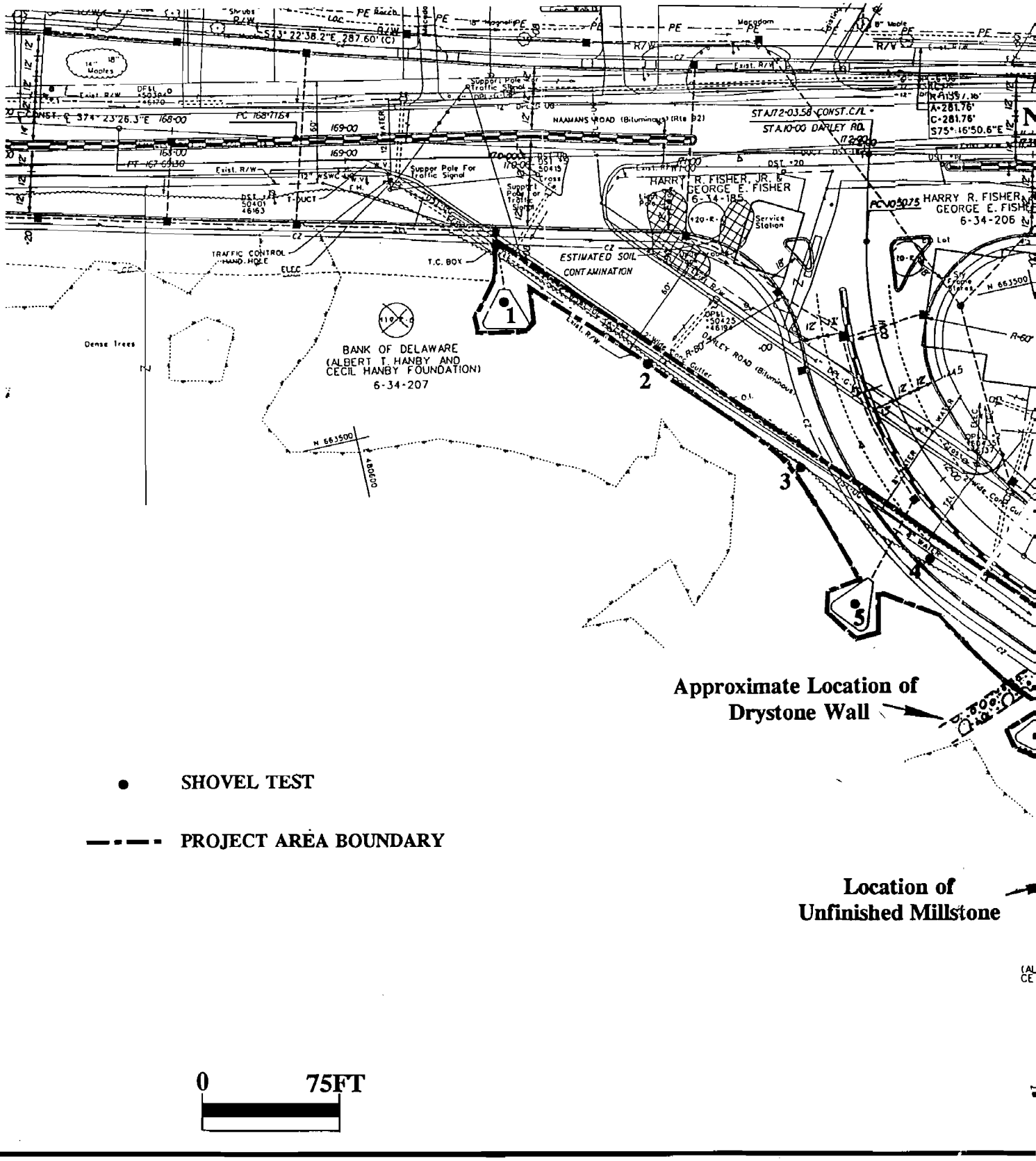
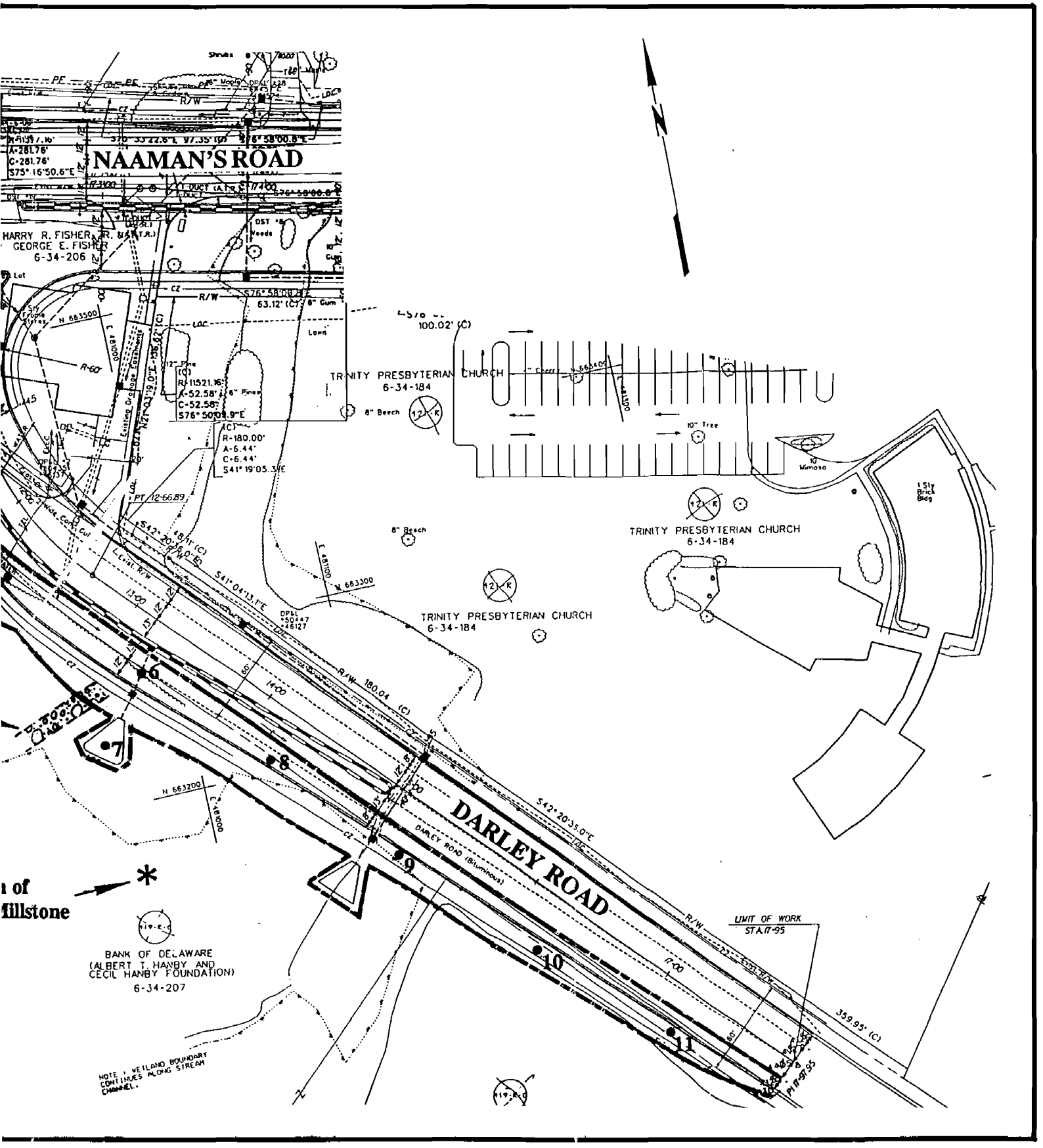


Figure 5.1. Project Plans Showing Locations of Sub



ions of Subsurface Tests - Darley Road Study Area.

Plate 5.1. View looking southeast towards Darley Road, showing stone wall (Photographer: Ernest Bower, April 1994). [HRI Neg. 93042/2-17].

Plate 5.2. View looking east showing partially completed millstone near the Darley Road study area (Photographer: Ernest Bower, April 1994). [HRI Neg. 93042/2-20].

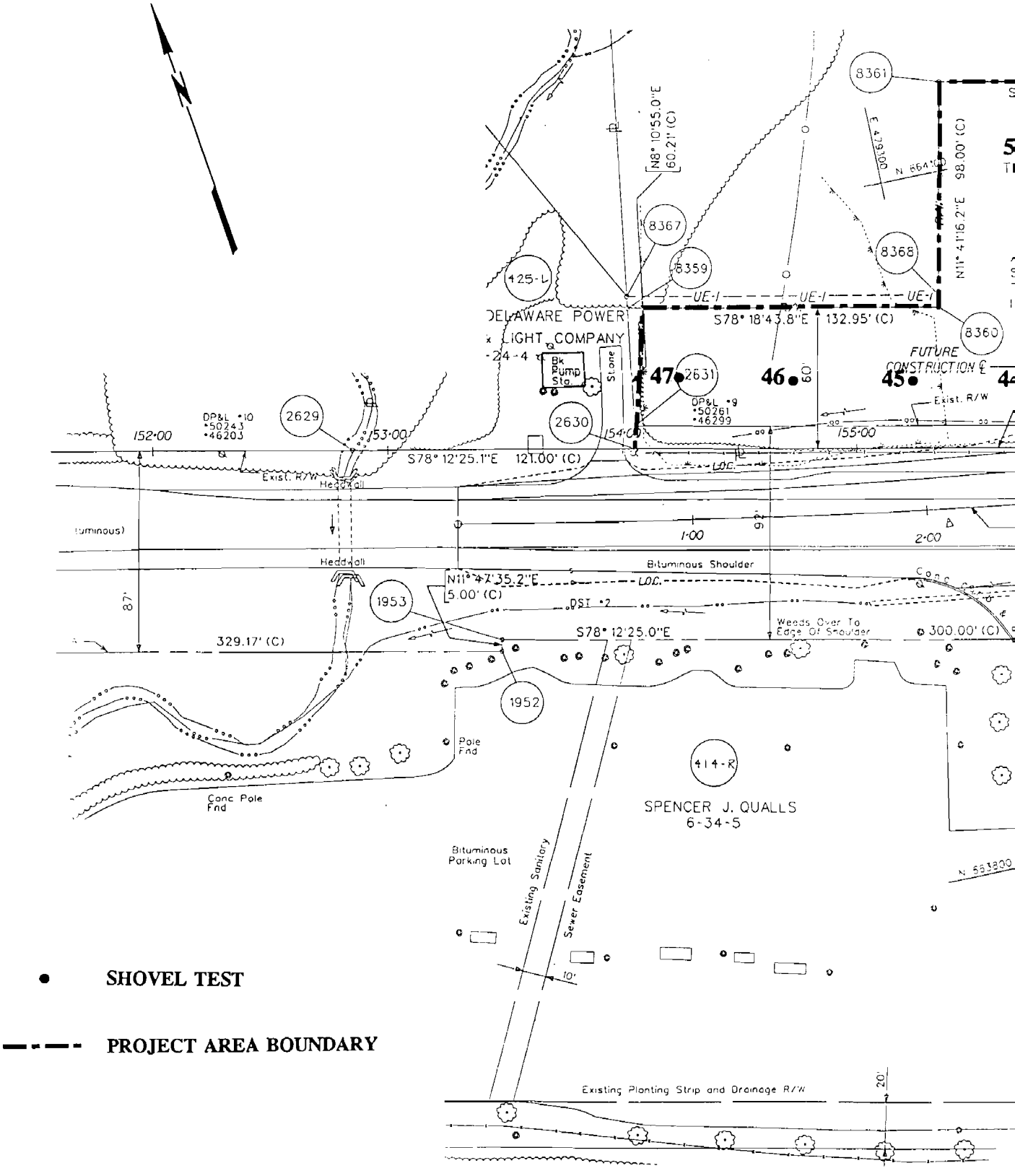
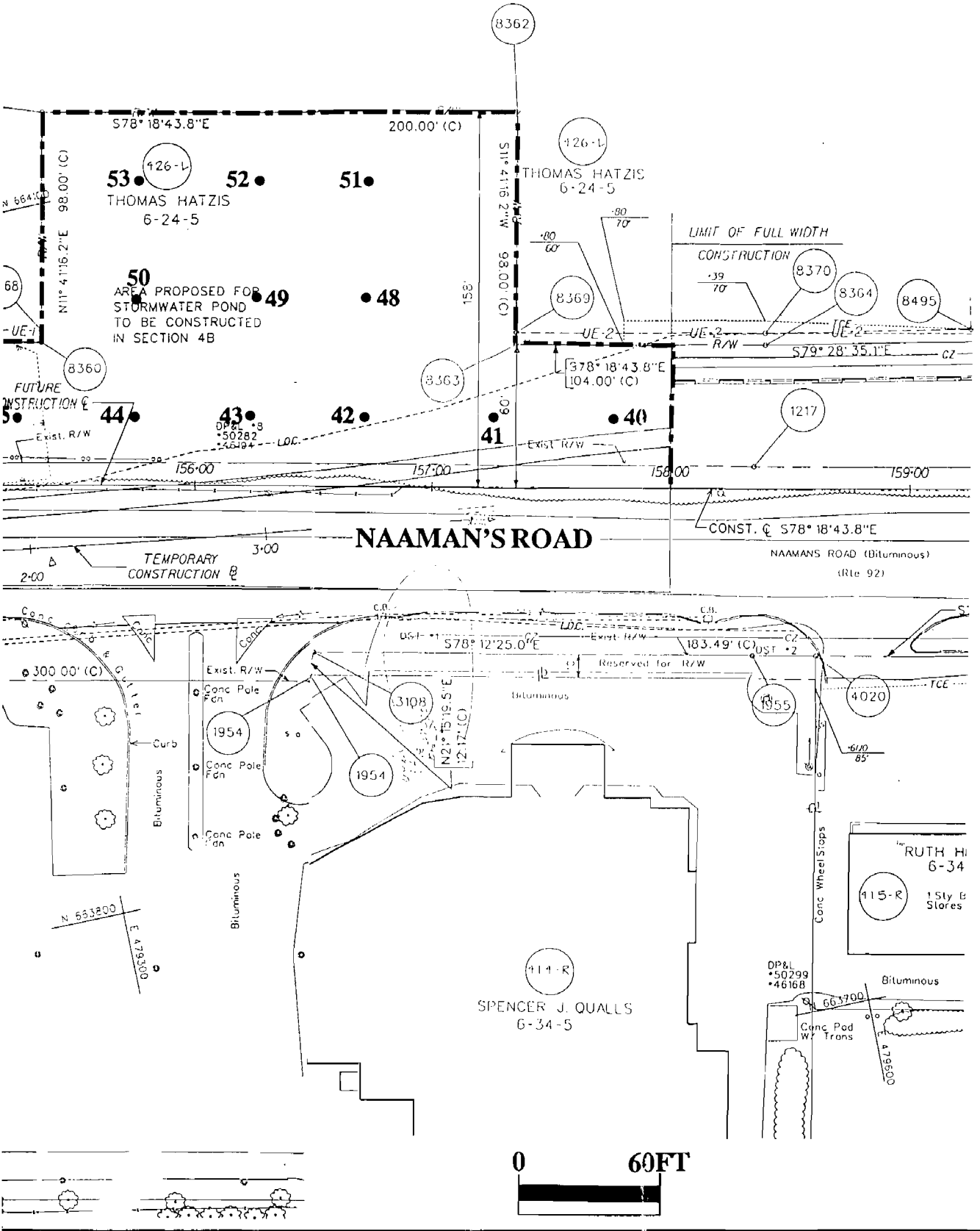


Figure 5.2. Project Plans Showing Locations of Subsurf



s of Subsurface Tests - Naaman's Road (East) Study Area.

Plate 5.3. View looking west along Naaman's Road with the Naaman's Road (East) study area in the foreground and the Naaman's Road (West) study area in the woods beyond (Photographer: Ernest Bower, April 1994). [HRI Neg. 93042/2-7].

B. Naaman's Road (East) Study Area

No standing structures are located within this study area, but background research indicated the former existence of a 20th-century structure in the immediate vicinity. A farm stand is located to the east of the study area, and a small utility building is located to the west. A housing development has been constructed in recent years to the north of the study area (Figure 5.2).

This study area consists primarily of an open field, covered with grass, and as a result offered very limited surface visibility. Investigation of the ground surface therefore concentrated on the few areas of sparse vegetation cover. No signs of above-ground remains or surface indications of archaeological remains were observed. No evidence of the 20th-century structure which stood in this vicinity was observed, and its location may have been obliterated by earlier widening of Naaman's Road.

Subsurface testing within this study area was undertaken using a grid system with a testing interval of 50 feet (Figure 5.2). All 15 of the shovel tests (ST 39-53) showed the presence of a well-defined plow zone (Appendix A). Very few artifacts were recovered and these all were of 20th-century date, with the possible exception of some cut nails (Appendix B).

C. Naaman's Road (West) Study Area

The Naaman's Road (West) study area, a parcel measuring approximately 350 feet by 350 feet, lies immediately west of the Naaman's Road (East) study area described above (Figure 5.3). Much of the parcel is wooded, although the western portion is covered by low brush and evidently had been cultivated in recent years. The boundary between this abandoned field and the western edge of the woods was indicated by remnants of a barbed wire fence and a low ridge of soil which had accumulated during cultivation.

Three survey lines containing a total of 14 shovel tests (ST 54-67) were excavated west of a tributary stream; the survey lines were 50 feet apart, and shovel tests within each line were placed at intervals of 25 feet (Figure 5.3). No cultural materials were found in the shovel tests. Soil profiles reflect the natural soil types present within the project area. The Watchung silt loam in the woods adjacent to the stream is reflected in profiles of a silt loam A horizon overlying a denser clay subsoil B horizon. Profiles in the abandoned field revealed a deeper A horizon plow zone above a B horizon which graded into a denser clay (Appendix A).

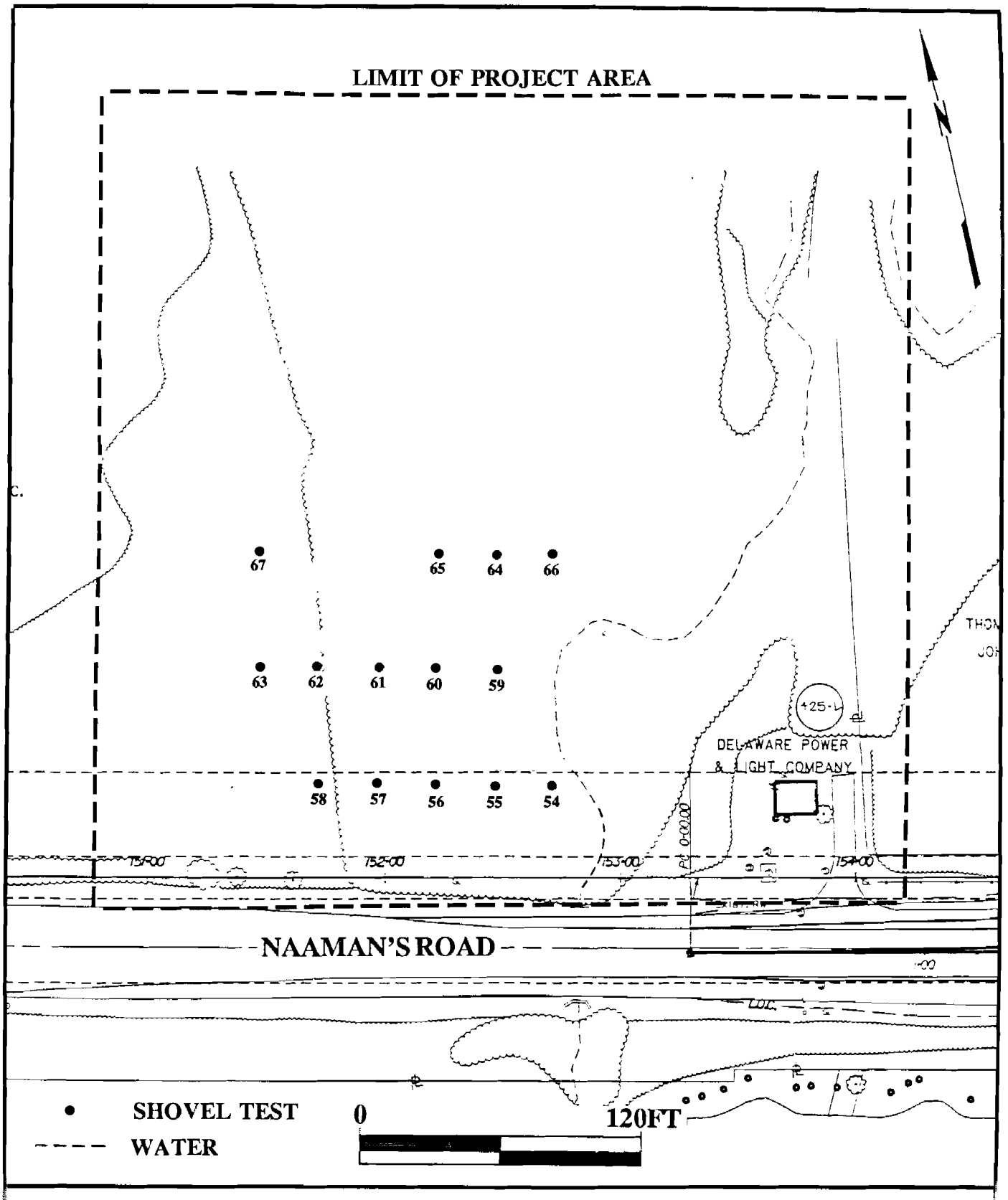


Figure 5.3. Project Plans Showing Locations of Subsurface Tests - Naaman's Road (West) Study Area.

D. Marsh Road Study Road Area (J.G. Hanby House Site)

No standing structures are present within this study area, although surface examination revealed the foundations of one obvious structure and a well (both identified during the earlier DelDOT survey [Cunningham et al. 1986]), and an area that contained large amounts of building rubble (Figure 5.4; Plates 5.4 and 5.5). This rubble consisted mostly of locally derived stone, but bricks were also observed. Upon further examination of this area, an intact portion of a second building foundation was observed. This short (one foot in length) portion of foundation was the only area not completely covered by dirt and stone rubble. Due to its substantial construction and proximity to the well, this feature was identified as a possible dwelling.

Subsurface testing was initially undertaken within the Marsh Road study area using shovel tests spaced at 50-foot intervals over a grid. This testing was undertaken over the entire site in an effort to locate any additional foundation remains or subsurface features. During the course of this testing no further significant remains were encountered, although some isolated 19th-century artifacts were recovered. The testing revealed a well-developed A horizon covering most of the area, while in the area of the supposed house foundation extensive signs of ground disturbance were evident. One shovel test excavated in an area believed to be within the limits of this structure revealed deep artificial fill including many large pieces of rock similar to those exposed on the ground surface.

Excavation Unit 1: After completion of the shovel testing, an excavation unit was placed in the immediate area of the exposed building foundation observed during the pedestrian survey (Figure 5.4; Plates 5.6 and 5.7). This unit, Excavation Unit 1, measured five feet by five feet in plan and was placed along the presumed interior face of the foundation. The excavations quickly exposed the upper portions of what proved to be a rather homogeneous deposit of cellar fill. This fill (Context 1) consisted of a silty loam heavily laden with large stones and debris. The majority of the artifacts in the fill material were of 20th-century date. Due to the concentration of modern debris, the fill was not sifted and only a representative sample of artifacts was retained (Appendix B). Context 1 extended downward to a cement or mortar floor (Context 5) encountered at a depth of 4.7 feet below present ground surface. No further excavation was undertaken, since it would have required destruction of a portion of the floor. It is possible that this floor may overlay an earlier occupation level.

Three mortared stone walls were exposed which clearly predated the installation of the floor, since the floor matrix abutted the wall masonry. These walls survived to a height of 3.5 feet above the floor. Two walls with east/west orientations (Contexts 2 and 4) were encountered on the north and south sides respectively of the excavation unit, while a north/south wall (Context 3) formed the eastern boundary of the unit. This eastern wall appears to be a main foundation wall for the dwelling, with the two perpendicular walls butting up against it. Probing in the surrounding area indicated that the eastern wall extends beyond the limits of the excavation unit.

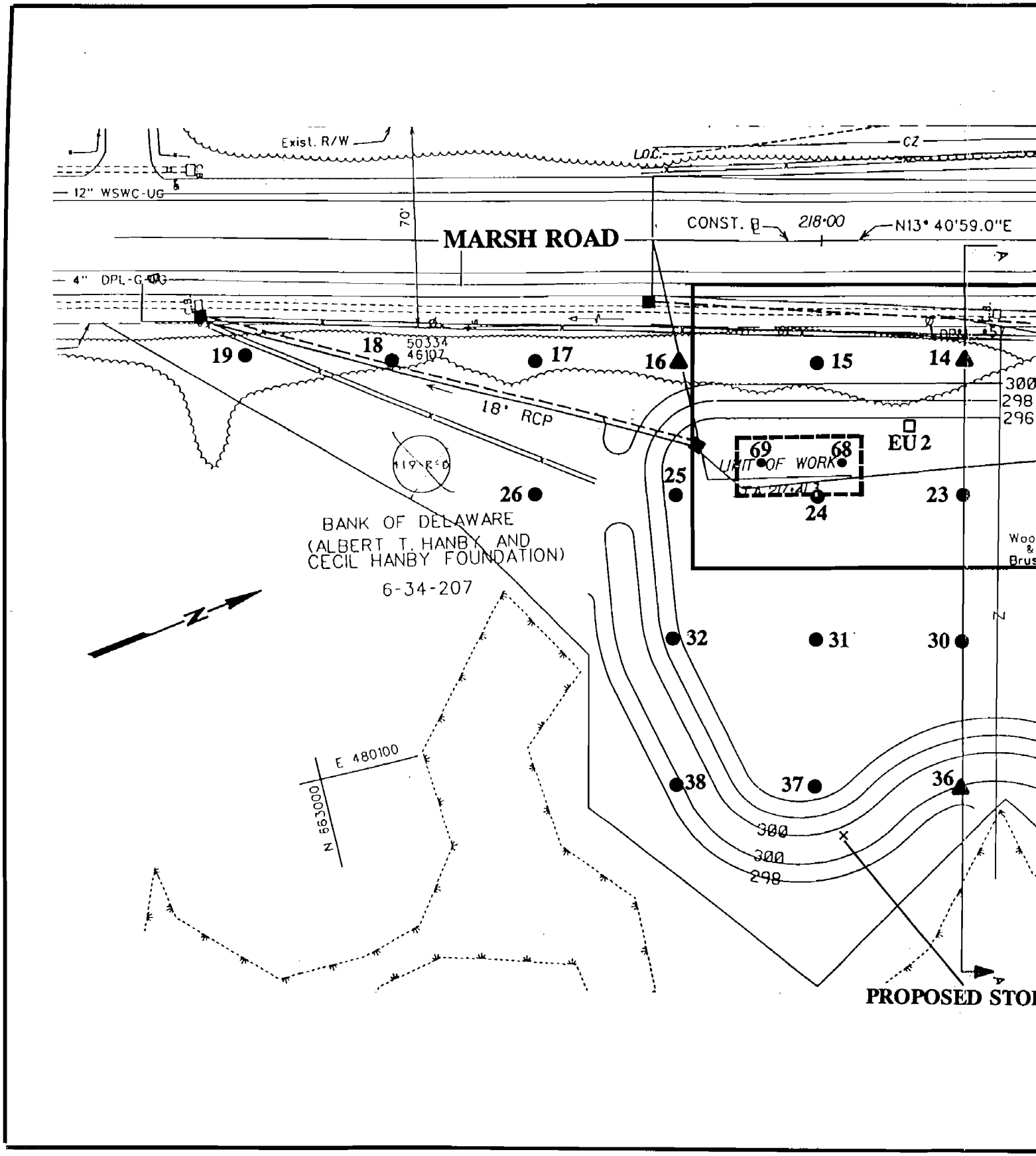
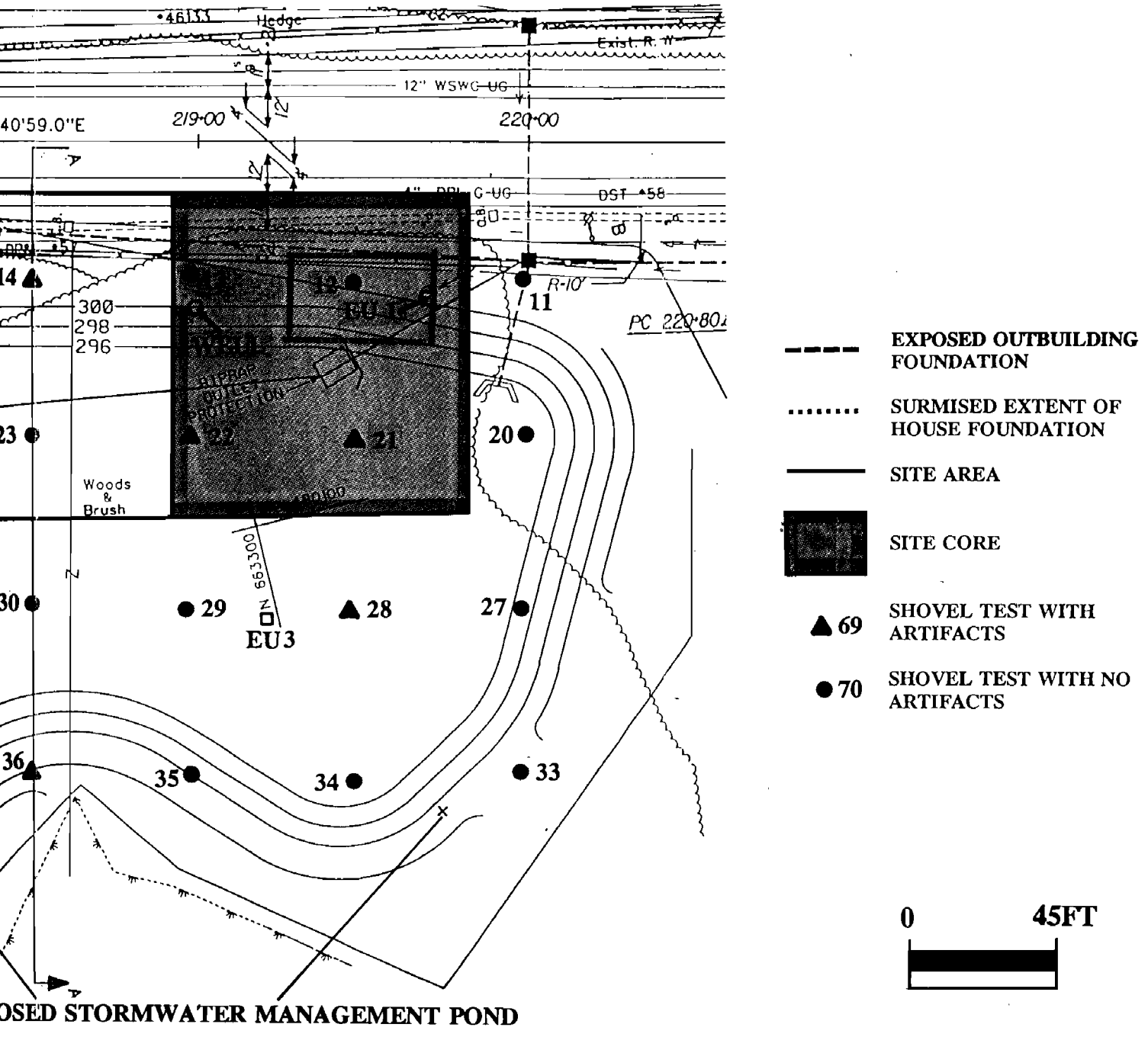


Figure 5.4. Project Plans Showing Locations of Subsurface Test



surface Tests - Marsh Road Study Area (J.G. Hanby House Site).

Plate 5.4. Marsh Road study area: view looking south showing possible outbuilding foundation at the J.G. Hanby House Site at left foreground (Photographer: Ernest Bower, April 1994). [HRI Neg. 93042/1-27].

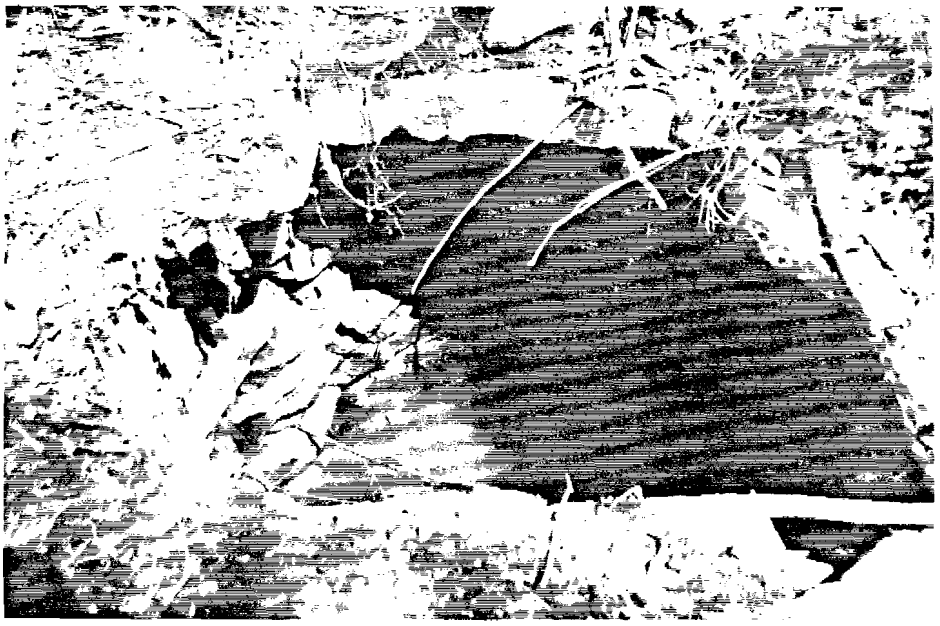


Plate 5.5. Marsh Road study area: view looking north showing well at the J.G. Hanby House Site (Photographer: Ernest Bower, April 1994). [HRI Neg. 93042/1-22].

Plate 5.7. Marsh Road study area (J.G. Hanby House Site): view of Excavation Unit 1 looking north, showing the two short walls extending from the probable foundation wall (Photographer: Ernest Bower, April 1994). [HRI Neg. 93042/1-10].

The perpendicular walls extend for a distance of 4.7 feet from their intersections with the foundation wall. The inside faces of these two walls are located approximately 2.8 feet apart. The southern wall (Context 4) was fully exposed, and measured 1.6 feet in width. The function of the two walls are unknown, although they may have served as supports for an overhead hearth and chimney.

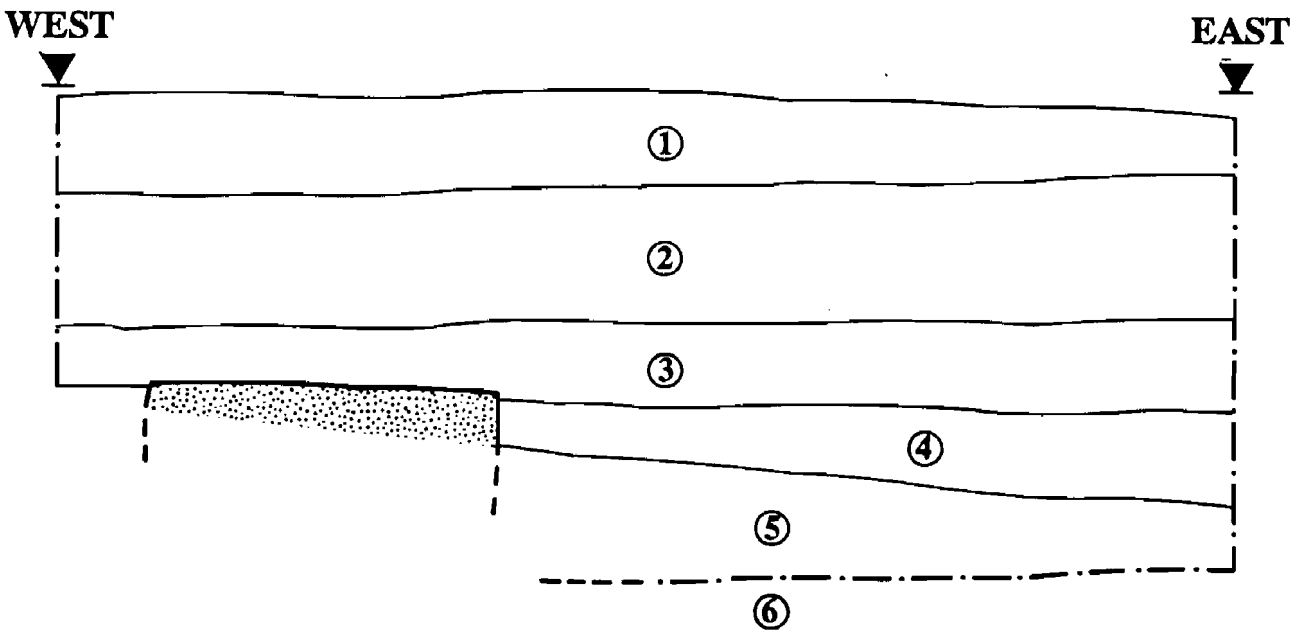
Following consultation with staff of the Delaware Department of Transportation and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, it was decided to excavate two additional excavation units in the historic yard and two shovel tests within the limits of the outbuilding foundation.

Excavation Unit 2: Excavation Unit 2, which measured three feet by three feet in plan, was placed on a diagonal line between ST 24 and 14, northeast of the outbuilding foundation (Figures 5.4 and 5.5). The B-horizon natural subsoil (Context 6) was encountered at a depth of 1.2 feet below grade. Context 5, 0.2-0.5 feet thick, consisted of clay silt and appears to be a buried transitional A/B horizon. Numerous unmortared diabase stones rested upon the natural clay, and were surrounded by Context 5. An ironstone sherd suggested a third to fourth quarter of the 19th century date at the earliest for the level. Context 4, a level of clay loam, 0.3 feet thick, also surrounded the stones and appeared to be another buried transitional horizon. The level yielded sherds of ironstone, a glass bottle neck and window pane fragments, and a wire nail, indicative of a fourth quarter of the 19th century date or later for the level.

Context 4 and the associated stones were covered by Context 3, a darker loam, 0.3 feet thick, which contained large quantities of oyster shell. Context 2 was a dark silt loam, 0.3 feet thick, with coal ash and cinders. Both Contexts 3 and 2 were A horizons, albeit culturally disturbed ones of relatively recent date. The unit was sealed by Context 1, a dark organic O horizon measuring 0.2 feet in thickness.

Excavation Unit 3: The third three-foot square excavation unit was placed along the eastern edge of the area investigated through shovel testing (Figures 5.4 and 5.6). Context 4 was a compact, mottled, slightly silty clay, 0.05 feet in thickness, which covered natural subsoil. No artifacts were recovered from this stratum. Context 3 was a silty clay, 0.3 feet in thickness, which yielded a transfer-printed ironstone sherd suggesting a post-1850 date. Context 2 was a very silty loam, 0.1-0.15 feet in thickness. Five sherds of ironstone and porcelain recovered from this deposit suggested a date of deposition no earlier than the late 19th century. The unit was sealed by a modern humus layer, 0.4 feet thick.

Two additional shovel tests (ST 68, 69) were excavated within the limits of the foundation at the southern end of the tested area. Each revealed comparable stratigraphic sequences grading from humus through silty clay to mottled clay, and neither yielded any artifacts.



Context	Description/Interpretation	Munsell
①	humus/silty loam (O-Horizon)	10YR 2/3
②	silty loam w/coal ash (A-Horizon)	10YR 3/2
③	silty loam w/oyster shell (A-Horizon)	2.5YR 3/2
④	clay silt loam (A/B-Horizon)	10YR 5/3
⑤	clay silt loam (A/B-Horizon)	10YR 6/4
⑥	mottled clay silt (B-Horizon)	2.5YR 6/4

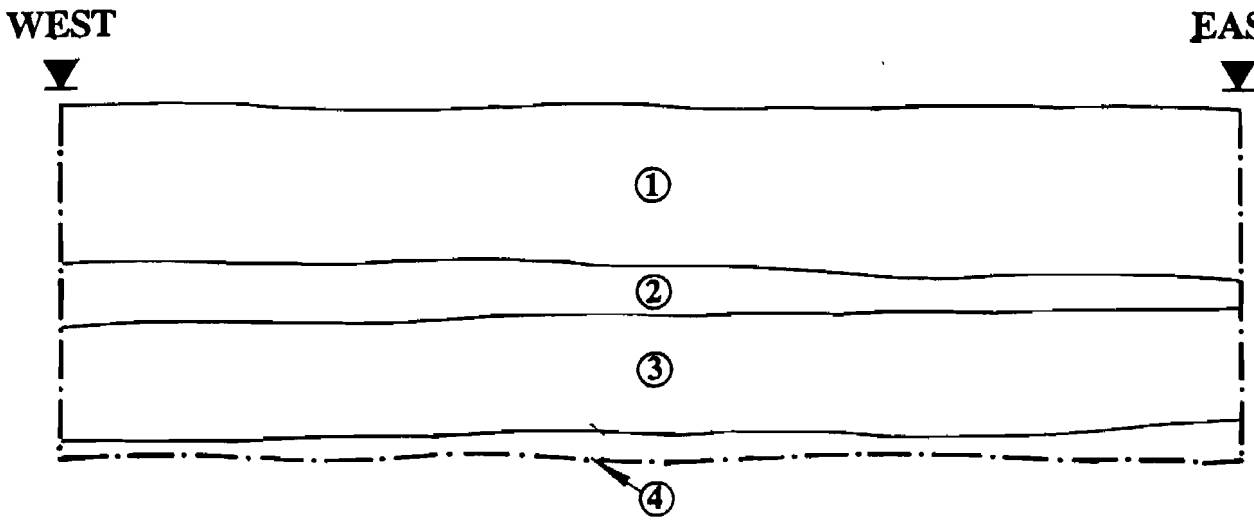
STONE

LIMITS OF EXCAVATION

UNEXCAVATED

0 1FT

Figure 5.5. Marsh Road study area (J.G. Hanby House Site): Excavation Unit 2, North Profile.



Context	Description/Interpretation	Munsell
①	humus/silty loam	10YR 2/3
②	silty loam	10YR 5/3
③	silty clay	2.5YR 5/6
④	mottled silty clay	10YR 5/6

—·— LIMITS OF EXCAVATION

Figure 5.6. Marsh Road study area (J.G. Hanby House Site): Excavation Unit 3, North Profile.